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Report by the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe in Bosnia and Herzegovina covering the period from July to September 2000

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1. Political situation

1.1. Common Institutions

The past week has seen mixed progress on the stony path towards creating BiH joint institutions. The BiH House of Representatives adoption of the new Law on State Treasury was a fundamental step forward in strengthening that institution and when fully implemented, it should create a tighter grip on how public money is spent, as well as more severely limiting its misuse. However, the longer-term prospects for revenue collection will undoubtedly become intensely controversial, particularly within the RS, and little more is likely to be achieved before the November 2000 elections. The issue of car insurance levies between BiH and FRY has been rather less encouraging, with confusion and uncertainty over lines of authority being helped along by institutional decision-making processes which seemed at times to be driven by smoke and mirrors. Mr. Spasoje Tusevljak, the Prime Minister, surprised the public and the International Community when he stated just after the inauguration of the new Council of Ministers that not very much could be expected from new Government as the holiday season was coming. This was not so popular a statement, particularly for somebody who had just taken over the Government leadership over Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mr. Tusevljak is at the same time professor of the University and says, "both these jobs can easily be done".

There is continuing tension between the Parliament of BiH and the Council of Ministers in the sense that they are accusing each other for poor results of State Government.

1.2. War Criminals

The arrest of two major war criminals, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic is likely to take place very soon. Representatives of the International Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina are making more and more announcements but opinions are divided. While some people see their arrest as a major blow for stabilization and peace efforts in the region some internationalists believe this issue was given too much attention when there are more important things to think about. Officials of ICTY are constantly making the arrest announcements, in particular Prosecutor Mrs. Carla del Ponte, who promised to arrest two major suspects by the end of the year. Certain SFOR units are being trained particularly for this task.

1.3 Army

- ▶ Former Secretaries General
- ▶ Former Deputy Secretaries General
- ▶ Archives

The cooperation of the Entity Armies and the Standing Committee for Military Matters was described as very good. There were even some engineering works performed together by FBiH and RS armies. Even though every military official declares readiness for Bosnia and Herzegovina to join Partnership for Peace, the RS Army officials at the same time strongly reject any idea of a unified Bosnian Army which is one of the major preconditions for Bosnia and Herzegovina to join PFP. This seems to be a very sensitive issue and should be approached with utmost caution. The unified Bosnian Army is definitely a future but the timeframes are for the time being difficult to define.

1. 4 Resignation of Dr. Jadranko Prlic and dismissal of West Mostar University Rector

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dr. Jadranko Prlic, offered to the HDZ (Croat Democratic Union) his resignation from all positions within the party. This event took place following the dismissal of the Rector of Mostar West University, Mr. Tadic, who has been dismissed by the Steering Board of the Croat Community of Herceg Bosna (a sort of legal successor of illegal state of Herceg Bosna, whose primary political aim was to annex the south-west part of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Republic of Croatia). Mr. Tadic's fault was to establish an Association of Croats from Bosnia and Herzegovina and to decide to remove old photographs of politicians and war leaders from University premises. These actions resulted in his dismissal by a body which is not at all supposed to be dealing with such issues in the first place. This was the President of the Croat Community of Herceg Bosna, Mr. Vladimir Soljic, member of HDZ and member of Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr Tadic was a visionary who had the idea of bringing an integrated system of third level education to Mostar; this was in conflict with the beliefs of the hard-line factions of the HDZ. At this juncture it is hard to see why such a stance was taken by HDZ and why they risked such a confrontation with the International Community so close to the General Elections. It is probable that the answer lies in the comments of the Governor of Canton 7, who stated that HDZ had made several compromises to the International Community with the promises of funding for the city of Mostar. HDZ reckons that these compromises could be easily sold to the HDZ electorate with the influx of money and jobs. HDZ feels that these promises of money and jobs were not forthcoming and said future compromises would be difficult to achieve and the University was such an issue. HDZ has dug in its heels in the face of the International Community overt support for Mr Tadic and the support of the moderate faction of HDZ. The International Community now has an embarrassing situation on its hands with HDZ having pushed the issue to the utter limit, defying the wishes of the International Community. This issue is not finished yet and the sparring between the International Community and HDZ over the issue will continue, but a resolution to the liking of the International Community may indeed rest in the legality of the decision of the Mr Covic led action being correct or not. Mr Tomic, the Mayor of Mostar, will not make any hasty decisions regarding his membership in the HDZ but the difficulties he will come across from HDZ may indeed speed his demise from the party.

1. 5 No confidence vote in the RS Government by the RS National Assembly (RSNA)

On 11 September 2000 the RSNA gave a vote of non-confidence to the RS Government on its 7th extraordinary session held on 4th of September 2000. The decision came unexpectedly after a proposal of SDS that this question be put on the agenda of the session. This is not the first time SDS tried to put this topic on the agenda but former constellation in the PA (existence of SLOGA coalition and support of CD Coalition to PM Dodik) prevented them from doing so earlier. 43 MPs voted in favour of non-confidence (42 was necessary) while CD Coalition decided not to vote. The Government will continue to work until new PM is appointed which brings RS into a constitutional crisis due to fact that the PM is appointed by President of RS who (Mr Nikola Poplasen) has already been removed from his office by decision of the High Representative. The Government is ordered by the PA to continue their work until new Government is formed but without any right to sell or buy property of RS, make financial deals etc. This decision was declared as unconstitutional by OHR as it brings RS into very serious situation. The PA was described by OHR as unserious because of the decision about non-confidence two months before General Elections. New PA will be formed based on the results of GE and new President will be elected who must then appoint new PM. This process will take some time meanwhile leaving RS without legal Government. However, the major cause of this political crisis may in part stem from the behaviour of Mr Dodik. His manner of ruling the RS, dealing with the opposition within the RSNA, dealing with the political parties not in Sloga but who normally supported the government (DNS and KCD) may at times have been perceived as brusque and insensitive. The final straw for his opponents appears to have been the removal of personnel from the boards of state companies, without any semblance of referral to the RSNA. At the 7th Extraordinary Session, the RSNA interpretation of 'Caretaker Capacity' is that this effectively removes Mr Dodik's power to implement these removals. Recent statements by Mr Dodik to the press however indicate that this is not Mr Dodik's interpretation

of things. The amount of money that flows through these companies, in an otherwise almost bankrupt economy, makes control of them very important. Funding for the election has to come from somewhere. It appears that Mr Dodik has read the writing on the wall in respect of his diminishing chances of success in the election for the RS Presidency. His actions in the RSNA during the past week may have done nothing to assist him in acquiring the second preference votes of Bosniaks and will have further distanced him from the DNS. However it is assessed that it is unlikely that he will change his approach or actions for the remainder of his government's term of office. This can only increase the political turbulence in the RS for the coming weeks.

1. 6 Results of the pre-election research

UN Development Fund completed the research of the public opinion. The results showed a growth of popularity of oppositional parties, both in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Republika Srpska. It is the case that none of the national parties can gain more than 40% within its own people. Precisely, the figures are following: SDA 21,9%, SDS 32,2% and HDZ 39,4%. There is a trend of political profiling in Bosnia and Herzegovina where now majority of voters thinks that only 5 parties in Federation (SDA, HDZ, SDP, SZBiH and NHI) and 6 parties in RS (SDS, PDP, SNSD, SNS, SDP and Radisic's SPRS) can gain more than 3% of votes in order to be represented in the Parliament. In order to preserve fair presence in the Parliament the OSCE decided to apply new rule for the elections. This is a positive trend, having in mind that Bosnia and Herzegovina had large number of parties for the General Elections in 1998 and smaller parties were those who consumed majority of votes to be given to oppositional parties. General Elections in 1998 hosted 69 political parties and 9 coalitions, compared to "only" 44 parties and 1 coalition take part in 2000 General Elections.

1. 7 Political parties in Federation prior to General Elections

The breakup of the CD Coalition, headed by SDA (Bosniak national party) is one of the major events in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. SDA is losing support throughout the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina rapidly. How serious the situation is, is shown by the following example. The HDZ (Croat national party) congress that took part in July was followed by a very unusual event. The former Governor of Sarajevo Canton Mr. Midhat Haracic (member of SDA and close friend of Mr. Alija Izetbegovic) addressed the congress by offering HDZ a coalition, as he believes that the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina lies in the hands of moderate national parties. The initiative was welcomed but no written agreement has been made so far.

1. 8 Political parties in RS prior to General Elections

The political parties in RS are waiting for the FRY elections results. The SNS has even said that the party's strategy will change, depending on the victory or defeat of FRY President Milosevic. However, there is a strong belief that SDS will win the elections. In addition, there is a feeling that SPRS is approaching more and more towards SDS. In eastern RS there has been a private meeting attended by the Member of BiH Presidency, Mr Zivko Radisic (Bosnian Serb, SPRS), the President of RSNA, Mr Petar Djokic (Bosnian Serb, SPRS), the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of BiH, Mr Spasoje Tusevljak (Bosnian Serb, but former political adviser of Mr Karadzic), the Vice President of RS, Mr Mirko Sarovic (Bosnian Serb, SDS). The official reason for the meeting was the political situation in RS but there is also an opinion that this was a preparatory meeting for the announcement of the new coalition in RS. The expectation that Mr Ivanic will be the next PM is very high within the PDP and indeed this is being an openly touted subject in international community circles. The PDP has worked hard at not taking sides in the current political set-up, so this policy is a high risk one that could easily be seen as playing both ends against the middle, and one which may need altering as the election draws closer. It is apparent that the PDP sees the SDS as being the most likely winners of the November 2000 elections, hence the PDP comments about undue and unbalanced International Community interference in the RS due to a strong "Sarajevo influence". Such comments are just the sort of thing that the SDS and their voters believe (whether it is true or not is irrelevant). If the PDP gains 25% of the RSNA seats as they hope, then they will be the king-makers in the RSNA. This target of 25% is possible as it is expected the SNS of Biljana Plavsic and SPRS will suffer severe losses, and the SRS are banned. However, accurate predications at this stage are difficult this early in the campaign. The independent RSNA Deputy Mr Ostojica Knezevic also believes the SDS will be the winners in the November elections and the movement of the SPRS towards the SDS (as well as the SPRS weakness) may well be the reason he chose that party in which to present his candidacy.

1.9 Mujahedins from Bocinja

The case of Mudjahedins from Bocinja (religious believers from Islamic countries who came to Bosnia and Herzegovina to fight on the Bosniak side during the war) who are living in the village of Bocinja (previously inhabited by Serbs) seems to be resolving itself without conflict. Most of the houses have now been emptied and are waiting for their prewar owners to return. The whereabouts of these people is for the time being unknown. The religion these people are practicing is unusual even for Bosnian Muslims who have always been pro western orientated. They live in compliance with Sheriet Law but do respect laws of the country. The Vehabijes, a completely new religious community is being formed in Bosnia and Herzegovina under the influence coming from Middle East.

During his visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina the Saudi Prince Selman bin Abdul Aziz, Head of High Saudi Committee for Assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina stated the shocking fact that Saudi Arabia had donated so far the sum of 200 M DEM for people of Srebrenica, and that it had become obvious that this money never reached the people of Srebrenica. The question as to where it went remains open. It seems that yet another case of corruption in the country is appearing.

1.10 Investigation about assassination of Mr. Jozo Leutar

The Federation Deputy Minister of Interior, Mr. Jozo Leutar, was murdered in March 1999 in the center of Sarajevo by a remotely activated bomb planted in his official car. His murder resulted in a major setback for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its institutions. Croat members of the Government of FBiH and Bosnia and Herzegovina boycotted the work of these Institutions for some time and mainly refused to come to work in Sarajevo, as they feared for their lives. An investigation of this character was never before seen in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The investigation was performed by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (Anti-terrorist squad), UNIPTF, SFOR, Federal Ministry of Interior, and Federal Ministry of Justice. After almost a year and a half, Special Forces of the Ministry of Interior of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ministry of Interior of Republic of Croatia arrested four Bosnian Croats in connection with this crime: Ivan Andabak, Dominik Ilijasevic, Zoran Basic and Zeljko Cosic. They were arrested during the past two weeks and are to face trial for terrorist acts against the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The crime has turned out to be an assassination by the Croat mafia in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who realized that Mr. Leutar posed a serious threat to their activities. Ambassador J.P. Klein, SRSG of the UN in BiH, accused Croat officials in the Federation of a lack of cooperation during the investigation.

2. Legal Affairs

2.1 Election Law

Being a precondition for the accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Council of Europe, the Election Law is being treated with urgency. Collegiums of the Parliament of BiH formed, on 17 July 2000, a working group for the preparation of the Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since then the Group has met several times but failed to prepare the draft and submit it to the Parliament. One of the salient issues is the election of the members of the Presidency and implementation of the decision of the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina about the constituency of all three peoples on the entire territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As the decision of the Constitutional Court has not yet been published in the Official Gazette, the Working Group apparently "cannot implement the decision in the new Election Law".

2.2 Law on Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Law on the Ombudsman for Bosnia and Herzegovina is still waiting in the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Venice Commission has prepared the Draft Law but the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina failed to adopt it as they wish to amend it by entering the tripartite system (three Ombudsmen). Parliamentarians believe that one person cannot impartially represent all three peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This Law is essential for the establishment of the Ombudsman for Bosnia and Herzegovina as this institution, which is currently headed by Mr. Frank Orton, intends to become fully "Bosnified" by year 2003.

3. Human Rights

3.1 Ombudsman Institutions (FBiH, RS, State)

Contrary to the situation in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the Ombudsmen of the FBiH are working full time elaborating a huge number of cases, the Ombudsmen of Republika Srpska have just recently been properly established. Now protected by the Law,

they were given offices within the OSCE Regional Centre in Banja Luka for the time being and until appropriate premises are provided by the Government of RS. The same goes for the funding of the Institution. The Ombudsmen of the Federation have their premises but financing remains mainly from the OSCE side. As already mentioned in the Legal part of the Report, the Law on Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina (state level) is blocked in the Parliament.

3.2 Return of refugees and displaced persons

OHR thinks that 200,000 to 350,000 cases relating to the return of property and disrespect of human rights might have shown up in the Human Rights Court in Strasbourg if Bosnia was a member. The process of return of refugees and displaced persons continues following the same dynamics as in the previous months. The implementation of the Property legislation imposed by OHR on the field seems to be the obstacle. The returnees are coming back even if their property has not been returned. There is a significant increase in the number of camps established by refugees themselves outside their pre-war places of residence. RS authorities have interpreted this as unreasonable pressure being put on them even though they are working hard in order to enable return. The High Representative has dismissed 27 officials, mainly from Municipal Ministries for Refugees from RS and FBiH for obstruction of Annex 7 of the DPA. These officials failed to implement the decisions of the Courts, mainly on property issues, and deliberately prevented refugees and displaced persons from returning. The return of refugees is closely related to the implementation of decisions by the Human Rights Chamber, Ombudsperson and Ombudsman from both entities and Commission for Real Property Claims.

On 4 October, 10,000 refugees from the Federation are expected to return to Banja Luka despite the fact that their property has not been reclaimed. They intend to establish a refugee camp in the very centre of Banja Luka. The reaction of the RS Government was very strict saying "we will not allow the creation of a camp in the centre of Banja Luka". It is likely that this might become another humanitarian catastrophe, as the winter is coming.

3.3. Merger of the Constitutional Court of BiH and Human Rights Chamber

The foreseen merger of the Constitutional Court and Human Rights Chamber was discussed at the meeting held on 1 September 2000 in OHR. The meeting was attended by Mr. Kasim Begic, President of the Constitutional Court, Mrs. Michele Picard, President of Human Rights Chamber accompanied by Mrs. Therese Nelson, Executive Officer of the HRC and Representatives of the OHR Legal Department headed by Mr. Ian Campbell. President Begic expressed his concern that the independence of the Court could be interfered with if it were left to the Parliament of BiH to regulate Court matters, taking into account the complex situation in BiH. The proposed Constitutional Law on the Constitutional Court (p. 4 points 4 and 5 of the Venice Commission Report dated 3 April 2000) with its very title implies a wide competence of the Parliament over the Court and its functioning. OHR proposed that law in question could be named "Law on the Merger of the Constitutional Court and the Human Rights Chamber". The next meeting will soon be held and the Council of Europe will keep the subject under close attention. The Law should be prepared before October so it can pass through Parliament before November elections.

4. Education

4.1. Higher Education

In order to improve the situation in Higher Education in BiH, the Council of Europe has been working on establishing a joint body that consists of the representatives of all parties involved in the reform of the higher education in BiH. The Higher Education Coordination Board was established in May 2000 after three years of joint efforts made by the Council of Europe and UNESCO. The primary task for the HECB is now to focus upon a workplan to be carried out by the end of the year 2000. By this time the conditions for international investment in coordinated systemic development of higher education in BiH should be met.

It was agreed that the HECB should function as autonomously as possible, and that its work should be undertaken in a professional and self-managed manner. International organisations were ready to support and facilitate the work of the HECB - responding to requests for assistance, co-chairing when necessary, and providing expertise and guidance on priority issues. The main responsibility for defining the content and implementing the work programme would lie with the members of the Board. The roles of the different organisations of the International Community were further clarified. The Council of Europe and UNESCO would continue to provide guidance and expertise to the HECB, and to assist with secretariat

functions in a period of transition. Work on issues of recognition of qualifications should aim at compatibility with the Joint Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Convention, and the establishment of a national information service to operate within the ENIC network could be taken forward and overseen by the HECB. Support on other priority matters (quality assurance / open and distance education) would also be provided, and efforts of other international organisations working in this field (such as the CRE and ESIB) would be coordinated.

The next (third) working session of the HECB is scheduled for 20/09/2000 in Banja Luka (according to the rotating manner of the meeting places SA – MO – BL).

At the next session the members of the Board will work on the Guiding Principles on the Development of Higher Education in BiH as well as on the Statute of the board and its role in internationally supported projects.

4.2. Human Rights Education and democratic citizenship

The second training seminar on Human rights teaching and democratic citizenship was held in Brcko from 08/09 – 10/09/2000. The Council of Europe trainers, Mr. Rolf Gollob and Mr. Peter Krapf, continued the training started in May 2000, and worked for two days with the new participants (teachers of Brcko district) as well as the participants from the May seminar. Thirty-five participants of this seminar were trained in Human Rights education, conflict resolution, teaching methods etc.

Follow-up seminars have been scheduled for the next two years and will be performed with the same trainers in periods of three months (4 per year).

The seminars have been shown to be a great success and were given written permission by the Head of the Education Department of the Parliament of Brcko District.

At the end of the training period it is expected that there will be approximately 150 well-trained teachers and teaching staff that will create a good core for a self- sustainable training mechanism. In order to reach this goal the Council of Europe training team have started to prepare the training of local Peer Support Groups.

4.3. Ministerial conferences

A joint initiative by the Council of Europe and OHR together with other international organisations in the area of education resulted in regular monthly meetings of the Conference of the National Ministers of Education in BiH. The meetings are co-chaired by the Council and OHR. The main topics of the Ministerial Meetings are : The textbook review, curricular modules etc...

At the moment the first phase of the textbook review has been completed. The most insulting and obviously offending materials have been removed from the textbooks used in BiH. The results of the review are best in «the Bosniak part» of the Federation of BiH where the new edition of freshly printed textbooks are printed without the insulting parts. In other areas of BiH the textbooks, with sections blackened out, are still in use. The second edition of the review is currently underway. This phase should finally get all disputable materials out of the textbooks used in BiH. After the end of the second phase of the review all textbooks in BiH should have BiH as their sole country of reference since, currently, children in the RS (which imports some textbooks from Yugoslavia) learn that the capital of their State is Belgrade.

In order to improve the return of minorities into the areas where they used to live the Council of Europe and OHR proposed that all curricula, namely Bosniak, Croat and Serb, adopt a certain number of hours that would be intended for the children to learn about the language, history, culture and culture of religions of other nations living in BiH. These curricular modules will also help the minority children to learn more about the culture, religion and language of their roots. The dispute with the curricular modules arose with the exact number of hours that should be used per year. The international community proposed that there be 20 + 20 hours per year in each curricula in BiH (For example : in RS curricula there should be 20 hours of Bosniak culture, language and literature and 20 hours of Croat culture, language and literature per year). The Federation Minister (Mr. Fahrudin Rizvanbegovic) accepted the proposal and will include it into this year's curriculum, while the RS Minister of Education, and the Bosnian Croat Deputy Minister of Education rejected this proposal. The OHR is close to finalising this issue by imposing it in the whole territory of BiH.

4.4. Europe is more than you think

«Europe is more than you think» is the Council of Europe publication intended for use in primary and secondary schools in BiH. This publication explains the Council of Europe role and closely focuses on the Council's structures. The booklet is intended for the use of teachers and students.

Minister Rizvanbegovic gave a very positive opinion of the publication and recommended its use in the schools in the Federation of BiH, in both Latin (85%) and Cyrillic (15%) versions as agreed earlier. The meeting with the Minister of Education of the RS is scheduled for the next month. The dissemination of the material in the Federation will start next month.

4.5. CoE leaflets

«The Council of Europe – General facts» and «The Council of Europe and Human Rights» are two leaflets intended for wide distribution. The leaflets have been translated into the local languages as well as in the languages used in Kosovo and are currently being printed. Distribution will follow shortly.

4.6. Culture

The Ministries of Culture of the Federation and RS are working on a joint project of adoption of standards set up by the Council of Europe that interpret the cultural policies of the member States of the Council. According to Council standards and resolutions, the state budget for culture should not be lower than 1% of the overall state budget. Currently in the Federation the budget is foreseen to be 0.6% for culture, and only 0.4% in RS. The Sarajevo Office of the Council will make efforts to press Parliaments and Governments to adopt these standards in the field of culture.

5. Activities and visits

5.1 Visit of the Rapporteur for the accession, 9–13 July 2000

The Council of Europe Rapporteur for the accession visited Bosnia and Herzegovina from 9–13 July 2000. Mr. Laszlo Surjan from Political Affairs Committee visited Banja Luka and Sarajevo and met with officials from both entities' Governments, army commanders, religious leaders, members of the International Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina and SFOR. At the Press Conference held on the last day of his visit, Mr. Surjan welcomed the progress in accomplishment of requirements for the accession and pointed out the necessity for the Election Law to be adopted by the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Delegation consisted of:

Mr. Laszlo Surjan, PAC of PA of the CoE

Mr. Catherine Hugel, Secretary of the PAC of PA of the CoE

5.2 Visit of Mr. Hans-Peter Furrer, Director General DGAP, 11 –12 July 2000

Mr. Hans-Peter Furrer, Director General of Political Affairs, visited Bosnia and Herzegovina from 11-12 July in order to prepare the beginning of the Council of Europe' Campaign on Diversity. He had meetings with Mr. Ibrahim Spahic who will be in charge of this campaign. The Campaign is scheduled to effectively start in early 2001.

Delegation consisted of:

Mr. Hans-Peter Furrer, DGAP

5.3 Visit of DGAJ representative, 11 – 16 July 2000

Ms. Heike Alefsen from DGAJ visited Bosnia and Herzegovina from 11 July to 16 July 2000. During the mission Ms. Alefsen visited Banja Luka and Sarajevo and met with both entities' Ministers of Justice, Public Prosecutors and Presidents of Judges and Prosecutors Associations.

Delegation consisted of:

Ms. Heike Alefsen

5.4 Seminar on Federal structures in Europe, 26 – 28 July 2000

The Council of Europe and the German Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina organized a seminar on 26-28 July 2000 with title "Federal structures in Europe". The seminar was held in three major cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Banja Luka (26.07), Sarajevo (27.07) and Mostar (28.07). The seminar involved the participation of experts from federal States of the Council of Europe i.e. Federal Republic of Austria, Belgium, Germany and Switzerland, and members of the Venice Commission.

Active media coverage followed the seminar.

Delegation consisted of:

Mr. Thomas Markert, Venice Commission Secretariat.

5.5 Round Table on Media and Judiciary, 14 September 2000

Council of Europe Media Section of the DGDH and UNMIBH Judicial System Assessment Programme organized a Round Table on Media and Judiciary on 14 September 2000. Experts from the Council of Europe took part in a Round Table discussing how much can be mentioned in newspapers without the non-respect of Human Rights and privacy.

Delegation consisted of:

Mr. Mario Oetheimer, Media Section of DGDH

5.6 Public Broadcasting sector

OHR strategy regarding the reform of public broadcasting sector in BiH has evolved to meet changing political environment. Peace Implementation Council prefers building the institution on the state level rather than Entity level. A substantive discussion between the Entities is required.

5.7 Start of the Joint Programme of the Council of Europe and US State Department

The first of ten training seminars for judges, prosecutors and other practicing lawyers on certain aspects of the European Convention on Human Rights (with a special focus on criminal law matters) took place on 18 September 2000 in Sarajevo. This training programme, which is also to include training on the domestic implementation of newly adopted legislation in BiH, will be implemented over the next three years, with funding from the U.S.

Delegation consisted of:

Mrs. Maggie Nicholson, DGDH

Forthcoming activities

5.7 Course on ECHR for Law students

Council of Europe DGDH and Glasgow Law School shall organize a course for Law students from Mostar, Banja Luka and Sarajevo from 25-30 September in Mostar.

5.8 Workshop on the Future of Youth Work In Bosnia and Herzegovina

Second workshop of three will be held from 23-29 September in Brcko

5.9 Workshop on the Future of Youth Work In Bosnia and Herzegovina

Third workshop will be held from 5-10 December in Sarajevo

6. Economic situation

Concerning the economic situation certain progress has been noted particularly with regard to the privatisation process. Both entities and other privatising agencies are working continually and in accordance with rules and regulations. The privatisation process itself is not so transparent. Independent media wrote about certain incorrectness during the process of privatisation of Hotel Holiday Inn in Sarajevo and this process is about to be revised. The privatisation must be completed.

The situation with process of abolition of Payment Bureau is following the same dynamics as before and should be ended up by the end of the year. The International Advisory Group established Working Groups in both entities whose primary goal is to provide assistance in transferring the specific functions of the Payment Bureaus to other institutions. Implementation plans for the transfer of each function has now been prepared.

Overall strategy for the future must include strengthening of financial police which is again related closely to independent judiciary.

Action begins for the Balkan Enterprise Facility. The offices are established in Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Skopje, Pristina and Tirana with main aim to support of small and medium enterprises as well as individuals and institutions that serve the needs of small and medium enterprises. Initial meeting of the donors are planned for 21st – 23rd September 2000 in Sarajevo

7. Conclusion

In general, the situation is improving, and the results of the General Election scheduled for 11 November 2000 might introduce a new setup of the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina thereby unblocking the current stasis. The awareness of the public is constantly rising, hence creating the impression among the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina that decision-making by politicians can be influenced by the public. The US Institute for Peace recently published a document which gives the main directions in terms of modification which should be done to the DPA. There is an ever-growing opinion that the Dayton Peace Agreement cannot offer anything else and therefore it must be modified in such a way that it can respond to the needs of modern democratic society. The fact is that the DPA has been neither fulfilled nor exhausted. The political orientation and aims of the people currently in power make its implementation practically impossible.

One sign of progress can definitely be seen in the joint BiH Olympic Team. Men and Women from both entities were presented together prior to their departure to Australia. This is the first time Bosnia and Herzegovina has one team to represent it.